

Comments of Sandra Davis

Parent, F.S. Edmonds School, Philadelphia, PA

October 17, 2005

Good morning to all. My name is Sandra Davis and I am the parent of a first grade daughter at the F. S. Edmonds Elementary School in Philadelphia.

Last year my daughter's class was selected to participate in the Kindergarten Initiative. It was a wonderful experience for the class. Many times my daughter came home excited about getting healthy snacks and learning how to make them. She had lots of fun! She was so excited when I agreed to let her try the fruit smoothie recipe that was taken off the 5aDay website. She was introduced to vegetables that I wouldn't normally buy. She had a chance to grow herbs that we could use. That was cool. La Kaya was always so excited to tell me what she had eaten in school that day for snack or what she had made.

I was able to participate with the class on a trip to Solly Farm. The children had a chance to plant a tree and grow their own potato bulbs. It was an absolutely wonderful experience even though the weather was windy and rainy. These opportunities gave the children a first hand experience in how to grow crops, prepare them for healthy snacks and then eat them. My daughter still vividly remembers the trip. Participating in this program taught me about PA farming and the various crops grown here. This experience also created an awareness of the Pennsylvania farmer's efforts within my neighborhood grocery store. I have even tried and enjoyed some of the vegetables grown here in the state.

This Kindergarten Initiative also provided interactive opportunities for parents and students to learn how to prepare healthy snacks. My daughter and I attended several of them. They were great experiences that we had always looked forward to attending. This also gave parents a chance to interact with other parents and children. I enjoyed being a part of this program. The little gifts were always a plus too!

I believe this program should definitely be continued and expanded if possible. More families should get the opportunity to enjoy its many benefits. One of the most important benefits is that the program provides a friendly way to introduce young children to healthy snacks and a healthy way of eating. I am sure this initiative has changed families by causing parents to be more aware and responsible for the food their children consume. If given the opportunity to participate again, I would do it in a heartbeat and with gladness!

To Bonnie and her staff, thanks for your hard work and including the 2004-2005 Kindergarten class of F. S. Edmonds Elementary School in Philadelphia in such a worthwhile program.

To Senators Waugh, Wenger, and everyone else, thanks for listening to our plea to continue and expand this program. Some young children's lives literally depend on it.